

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONROV 05020 121718Z

73 61
ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCI-06 RSC-01 DRC-01 /027 W

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R 121654Z SEP 73
FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9456

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MONROVIA 5020

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA, SCUI

SUBJECT: PROPOSED VISIT TO LIBERIA BY SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

TOUR GROUP HEADED BY RUSSELL WARREN HOWE

1. AMBASSADOR HAS RECEIVED LETTER FROM RUSSELL WARREN HOWE, BOX 687, GLEN ECHO, MARYLAND, REQUESTING ASSISTANCE FOR THIRTY-TWO PERSON "SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION" TOUR GROUP PLANNING VISIT LIBERIA JANUARY 24-26, 1974. EMBASSY ASSUMES RUSSELL WARREN HOWE IS BRITISH-AMERICAN JOURNALIST, WHO IS WELL BUT SOMETIMES UNFAVORABLY KNOWN TO AF BUREAU. EMBASSY RELUCTANT RESPOND TO HOWE LETTER UNTIL BONAFIDES OF TOUR GROUP VERIFIED.

2. ACCORDING TO HOWE LETTER HE IS "LEADING A FAIRLY EXTENSIVE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION TOUR OF WEST AFRICA'S HISTORIC CENTERS." MONROVIA APPARENTLY ONE OF SEVERAL WEST AFRICAN STOPS. HOWE ASKS EMBASSY ARRANGE AUDIENCE "WITH QUESTIONS" WITH PRESIDENT TOLBERT, ASSIST IN ARRANGING GUIDED TOUR OF MONROVIA AND TOUR OF FIRESTONE PLANTATION, ARRANGE A LUNCHEON AT GROUPS EXPENSE, AND PROVIDE AMBASSADORIAL BRIEFING ON CONTEMPORARY LIBERIA. HOWE SAYS HE PLANNING CONTACT LIBERIAN AMBASSADOR PEAL AT UNSPECIFIED TIME IN SEPTEMBER.

3. ESSENCE OF REQUEST IS FOR EMBASSY BECOME LOCAL TRAVEL AGENCY FOR TOUR GROUP, A ROLE WE RELUCTANT ASSUME UNLESS DEPARTMENT BELIEVES IT IN USG INTEREST TO DO SO. HOWE'S KNOWN PAST JOURNALISTIC INDISCRETION MAKES US PARTICULARLY RELUCTANT ARRANGE AN INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT TOLBERT WHICH MIGHT LATER BE BASIS FOR HOWE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE(S). SHOULD SUCH ARTICLE(S) DISPLEASE TOLBERT,

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COULD REFLECT NEGATIVELY ON US.

4. EMBASSY WOULD PREFER ADVISE HOWE IT BEST HE MAKE HIS ARRANGEMENTS THROUGH AMBASSADOR PEAL/GOL AND POSSIBLY A TOUR AGENCY EXPERIENCED IN ARRANGING AFRICAN TOURS. WE WOULD, OF COURSE, OFFER AN APPROPRIATE EMBASSY BRIEFING.

5. PLEASE ADVISE THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF USG INTEREST, IF ANY, IN THE TOUR. ALSO WOULD APPRECIATE INFORMATION AS TO COMPOSITION OF GROUP I.E. ARE ITS MEMBERS PERSONS OF ACADEMIC/INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS SUBSTANCE OR ARE THEY TOURISTS BEING SHEPHERDED BY HOWE FOR A FEE? ANY OTHER INFORMATION OR ADVICE DEPARTMENT CAN FURNISH WILL BE APPRECIATED.

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Message Attributes

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